

**TOWN OF NORTHFIELD, VERMONT**  
**SELECT BOARD REGULAR MEETING**  
**Minutes of November 24, 2020**

- I. ROLL CALL.** Select Board Chair K. David Maxwell, Board members Julie H. Goodrich, Nathaniel Miller, Charles Morse, and John Stevens. Also present were Town Manager Jeff Schulz, Acting Clerk Kenneth McCann, Patrick DeMasi (Utility Superintendent), Jon Ignatowski (Economic Development Director), Mark C. Anarumo (President, Norwich University), Daphne Larkin (Director of Media Relations & Community Affairs, Norwich University), Collin O'Neil (Manager, Shaw Outdoor Center, Norwich University & NRRR Steering Committee), Mark Kane (SE Group), Deborah Zuaro (Chair, Northfield Conservation Commission & NRRR Steering Committee), Lydia Petty (NRRR Steering Committee), Bonnie Kirn Donahue (NRRR Steering Committee), Susan Barnard (NRRR Steering Committee), Kenneth Goslant (NRRR Steering Committee), Dave Packie (Northfield Conservation Commission), Kaitlyn Keating (NCDN), Carolyn Stevens (NCDN), Brian Baker (Dufresne Group), Lynnette Claudon (Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation), Hugo Martinez Cazon (Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation), Susan Stillinger, Lorna Doney, Kahwa C. Douoguih, Ayden Eickhoff, and Mark Fournier.

Chair Maxwell called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. In keeping with Governor Phil Scott's COVID-19 "stay at home" directive, the meeting was held remotely.

- II. SET/ADJUST AGENDA.** There were no changes to the posted agenda.

**III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (SCHEDULED):**

- a. Mark C. Anarumo, President, Norwich University (NU).** President Anarumo noted today was the last full day that NU students would be on campus. He estimated about two hundred (200) were left and the dormitories will be closing at noon tomorrow. The students will not return to campus until mid-January 2021 as the remainder of this semester will be remote learning only. Since the Fall 2020 semester began last August, there have been 16,476 COVID-19 tests of NU students, staff, and faculty with only fifteen (15) positive tests in that timeframe. There are four (4) current positive cases but none of those individuals are in Northfield. President Anarumo feels all went as well as could be for the semester given the large number of unknowns when all the planning and procedures were put in place this past summer. Now that the students will be leaving, President Anarumo said the campus would be reopened for those who would like to take a driving tour of the NU campus. Leaflets for self-guided tours will be available at the Hayden Building and visitors will be expected to stay in their vehicles and not enter any campus facility. As indicated at the last meeting (11/10/20), President Anarumo said the campus wastewater was tested for Coronavirus and positive samples were found. NU will be working with the municipality on an action plan to determine the source, what can be done, etc. President Anarumo said with the frequent testing, temperature sensors around campus, and now wastewater testing, NU has put triple redundancies in place to determine the presence of COVID-19 on the NU campus. As indicated earlier, the NU students will return the weekend of January 16-17, 2021 and will be put in quarantine after being tested. In-person classes will start on Tuesday, February 2, 2021. On a personal note, President Anarumo said he has decorated the outside of Woodbury Hall (i.e. President's house) for Christmas and invited the community to come by and see. Chair Maxwell asked if the Select Board members would like to comment on President Anarumo's report. The Board members had no specific comments but all did praise President Anarumo's efforts in keeping the NU family (as well as the Northfield community) safe and healthy during this pandemic. Chair Maxwell wished President Anarumo and the other NU officials present a good holiday season. President Anarumo looks forward to working with the municipality in the new year regarding COVID-19 and other "Town and Gown" matters.
- b. Northfield Ridge + River Routes Steering Committee & SE Group: DRAFT Plan.** Manager Schulz said the draft plan distributed to the Select Board members about a month ago now will be formally presented by members of the Northfield Ridge + River Routes (NRRR) Steering Committee as well as consultant Mark Kane from the SE Group. The plan was funded by a state grant and Manager Schulz felt it provided many good recommendations regarding how the various sections of the Northfield community (i.e. NU campus, Northfield Falls, Northfield Village, etc.) can be better linked through improved pedestrian paths, bicycle lanes, off-road trail systems, and other infrastructure enhancements. Deborah Zuaro is a member of the NRRR Steering Committee as well as Chair of the Northfield Conservation Commission. She said the grant was awarded in 2019 and this project is now in the final stages with the draft plan delivery. She then introduced Mark Kane from the SE Group, which produced the document based on NRRR Steering Committee input and community surveys.

Mr. Kane said a decision was made early in the process (in the interest of expediency) to divide Northfield into four (4) geographic zones: Northfield Falls, Northfield Village, Northfield Center, and South Northfield. The general goal is to better connect these zones so that residents have improved access to the downtown area with its shops, restaurants, etc. as well as better links to recreational opportunities located throughout Northfield. Mr. Kane said the report does focus on five (5) locations where infrastructure enhancements should be prioritized: East Street, Central Street, Northfield Falls, Slate Avenue, and Wall Street. East Street is significant due to its proximity to the Village center (i.e. Common) and the numerous businesses located there. There also is the potential for increased recreational opportunities with a possible riverside trail system developed on the nearby Dog River. The new benches and bicycle racks installed along East Street, the result of a local group obtaining grant funds, is an example of how relatively small improvements can make a difference as incremental steps in preparation for possible bigger changes in the future. As for Central Street, Mr. Kane said it could be better developed as the main link between the NU campus and the Northfield downtown area with its many public services. Enhancements for pedestrians and bicyclists could be installed such as dedicated bike lanes, improved lighting, and a better crosswalk at the Wall Street intersection. Mr. Kane said this could become a preferred alternative for walkers and bikers instead of the Vermont Route 12 corridor. As for Northfield Falls, better off-road connections from the Falls to the Village area would open up significant opportunities for economic development, increased commerce, etc. This would include dedicated bike paths, improved sidewalks, etc. Mr. Kane said Slate Avenue is unique due to its proximity to both the downtown area as well as an entry site to the Town Forest trail system. Improved stormwater treatment and better sidewalks would be key to enhancing this area. There also is the possibility of installing an informational kiosk at the trail system entrance. Wall Street is important as the link between the downtown area (including nearby senior housing) and the recreational opportunities available at the Dog River Park. Improved sidewalks and safer crosswalks would be needed to encourage more pedestrian traffic between these two locales. Mr. Kane said the plan includes a list of immediate and long-term goals, known as an "Implementation Matrix," that was developed by the NRRR Steering Committee based (in part) on local feedback. The list includes cost estimates as well as likely sources for outside funding. Mr. Kane noted with such a detailed plan in hand, the likelihood of obtaining grant funds is much improved as these sources like to see written and detailed plans enclosed with the grant application. The plan also can be used to better align upcoming municipal capital projects (i.e. sidewalk upgrades, etc.) with a comprehensive long-term strategy for community development.

Chair Maxwell then asked if the Select Board members had any comments or questions regarding the NRRR draft plan. Board member Morse would have liked to have seen more emphasis on local improvements that might increase the municipality's Grand List by promoting local business opportunities, etc. Mr. Kane said several of the plan's recommendations, such as improved linkage between Northfield Falls and the downtown area, would have the long-term effect of improving economic opportunities in the community. There also are less expensive and more immediate actions that can help existing businesses by improving connect ability and thus attracting new streams of potential clientele. NRRR Steering Committee member Lydia Petty said her group would be more than willing to work with the Select Board on efforts to improve the business climate in Northfield by implementing some of the plan's priorities. However, there is no single suggestion in the plan that would result in overnight economic benefits. Board member Stevens said a lot of work has been put into the draft plan. He felt better connecting Northfield Falls to the downtown area should be a priority. He would like the Northfield Conservation Commission (NCC) to work with the Select Board in developing a list of projects that can be addressed through grant funds, etc. Board member Miller felt this was a fantastic report with a wealth of local information. He will keep in contact with the NRRR Steering Committee regarding what the Select Board members can do to expediate the process. Board member Goodrich agreed a lot of time and effort went into this plan, which will be invaluable when the municipality looks for grant opportunities. Chair Maxwell also appreciates the plan submitted and suggested the NCCC Steering Committee should address the Select Board members at a future meeting with their recommendations, which might include items that could be obtained in the near future at little or no direct cost to the municipality (i.e. "low-hanging fruit"). Ms. Petty said she and the other committee members would provide such advice to the Select Board members at any time. The plan itself provides considerable direction with at least twenty (20) priorities.

Mr. Kane said the real value of such a plan is to create a local environment where there is real impetus for achieving civic improvements. Perhaps the NRRR Steering Committee should become a standing committee so there is no loss of momentum and projects are pushed forward. Ms. Zuaro would be willing to remain part of this process in order to promote the listed priorities in order to improve the Northfield community. Chair Maxwell then thanked all those responsible for putting together this plan for the future and all those involved in tonight's presentation.

- c. **Brian Baker, Dufresne Group: Public Meeting–Findings of No Significant Impact–Main Street Stormwater Separation and CSO Abatement Project.** Mr. Baker, the project engineer from Dufresne Group, was present tonight along with Lynnette Claudon and Hugo Martinez Cazon from the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). Manager Schulz said due to state grant funds being used for this project, an environmental assessment was required that had to be presented during a public meeting. He said the study showed no significant environmental impact. Mr. Baker then provided a brief overview of this project, which would address stormwater runoff problems in the South Main Street area, including such side streets as Slate Avenue, Elm Street, and Prospect Street. These areas would see collection pipes installed that would divert stormwater to the treatment facility behind Holland Place. On-site infiltration chambers would be installed at the ends of the side streets (i.e. Highland Avenue, etc.). The project also would include elimination of Northfield's last remaining CSO (Combined Sewer Overflow), which is located on Elm Street as well as the installation of some stormwater collection facilities on Sherman Avenue and Houston Street. A separate permit will be required due to wetlands near Sherman Avenue. Possible contaminated soils near Houston Street will be addressed through a soil management plan. Ms. Claudon said opportunity for public comment is required at this stage of the project. Manager Schulz reviewed the statutes and found this could be done at a Select Board regular meeting instead of a separate public hearing. Chair Maxwell then asked if the Select Board members had any comments or questions. Board member Stevens had asked questions at a previous meeting that hadn't been fully answered at that time, such as the number of infiltration chambers to be installed on the side streets and how they would be cleaned of normal street debris, i.e. leaves, cigarette butts, etc. Mr. Baker said the soil composition analysis of the area found both ledge and groundwater so the chambers will have to be redesigned to be shallower than originally thought. This will affect the number to be installed. The chambers will have shields to prevent debris from getting inside. The other Select Board members had nothing to say. Manager Schulz then asked if any member of the public had any questions or comments. No one spoke. Manager Schulz said members of the public had thirty (30) days to comment on this project. Comments can be made and questions asked at the DEC website: <https://dec.vermont.gov/water-investment/water-financing/srf/environmental-review>. Questions or comments also can be directed to Manager Schulz and/or Mr. Baker. Chair Maxwell thanked all those involved in this project for the update and he looks forward to similar presentations in the near future.

#### IV. DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORT

- a. **Jon Ignatowski, Economic Development Director (EDD).** Mr. Ignatowski began work as Northfield's first EDD on September 15, 2020 and since then he has, among other things, been developing an action plan that has three (3) main components. First, a \$20,000 placemaking grant has been received from the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD). East Street would be the focus for some of the reasons highlighted earlier tonight in the NRRR draft plan. One possibility is to divert vehicular traffic from East Street for a few summer nights in order to create a pedestrian mall. Mr. Ignatowski has spoken to the East Street business owners about any concerns they might have. Board member Morse asked what "placemaking" meant in this context. Mr. Ignatowski said it meant low-cost enhancements to improve street accessibility, etc. In this case, it would make East Street more welcoming to pedestrians and facilitate post-COVID public gatherings. The temporary installation of a "parklet" is another possibility. Board member Morse feels this is a good idea but might not be feasible as East Street is the main thoroughfare for emergency services needing to access King Street, Turkey Hill Road, etc. The only alternative route would be through private property, i.e. the Northfield Savings Bank parking area. Board member Stevens likes the idea of a parklet, which would be similar to the ones in Montpelier. Board member Goodrich asked if the parklet would be removed in winter. Mr. Ignatowski confirmed the parklet would be installed in early May and removed by the end of October.

Chair Maxwell noted a previous East Street business ("The Knotty Shamrock") had a summertime parklet located in the parking area and there had been complaints that it impeded both vehicular and pedestrian traffic. He also has concerns about closing the street to vehicular traffic without an acceptable alternate route. Since this grant has no local match amount, Chair Maxwell encourages going forward on East Street enhancements provided all can be worked out to everyone's satisfaction. Mr. Ignatowski said grant acceptance was not contingent on creating a pedestrian-only space. This is only one possibility.

As for his second action plan proposal, Mr. Ignatowski suggested Northfield work create a community revolving loan fund in order to provide short-term loans to local businesses seeking facility improvements, working capital, etc. The money would come out of existing economic development funds. Chair Maxwell estimated the current balance in this account at about \$70,000. The loans would be administered by Jamie Stewart, the Executive Director of the Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation (CVEDC). Mr. Ignatowski felt this would be a good way to make use of these funds without depleting them in the process. Board member Morse thought this might be a good idea but would like to see a written proposal since public funds would be involved. Mr. Ignatowski said this was only a proposal at this time and he would make a full presentation at a future meeting if the Select Board members believe this is a good idea (at least in concept). Board member Morse thought the current municipal policy governing use of economic development funds might have to be revised to allow this. Chair Maxwell said any needed revision could be included with the formal presentation. Board member Stevens likes the idea but would like to see the proposal in writing before committing to it. Board member Miller also thinks this an interesting idea but there might be problems in establishing criteria for loan eligibility. He also wonders how much will be left in the fund once the EDD's salary is paid. Kaitlyn Keating from the Northfield Community Development Network (NCDN) noted the original proposal for the EDD position would have it partially funded with economic development funds for only the first two years. Afterwards, the position would have been a taxpayer-supported expense in the municipal budget. However, this future funding scheme was not included in the 2020 Town Meeting article that authorized establishment of the EDD position.

The third item Mr. Ignatowski would like to discuss tonight is the creation of a promotional website for Northfield. This would be similar to existing websites "Discover Waterbury" and "Welcome to Middlebury." This promotional website and the Northfield municipal website would be kept separate as the latter cannot be used to promote specific businesses. The new website would focus on what already exists in Northfield and would endorse Northfield as an excellent place to live, do business, etc. Mr. Ignatowski put a survey on the Front Porch Forum in order to get local feedback on what should be included on the promotional website. The cost of having a high-quality website would be about \$10,000 and Mr. Ignatowski asked if this is something the Select Board members would like done. Chair Maxwell said this expense must be made in accordance with the municipality's purchasing policy. In addition, if economic development funds are used it must be in accord with the current policy governing their use. Manager Schulz said the policy regarding economic development fund usage is brief and general. It states Select Board approval is required and the expense must benefit the community. The purchasing policy would require receiving quotes through an RFP process. Board member Morse thinks a promotional website may be needed but is concerned about depleting the economic development fund. Perhaps the Select Board members should add some new economic development funds in the FY 2021/2022 budget. He asked how long it would take to get the website up and running. Mr. Ignatowski said once a resource team has been established, he would start work next January and have it online by late spring 2021. A lot of local information would be incorporated so this would be a major project. He felt this would be a legitimate virtual gateway to Northfield and put us on the map. Board member Stevens likes the idea of a promotional website. Board member Goodrich doesn't see how current businesses would benefit from this. Mr. Ignatowski said there would be a directory of current businesses that would provide such valuable information as restaurant menus, etc. There already are several local websites with such information but this would put it all in one location. Board member Goodrich is concerned that Mr. Ignatowski will devote all his time to the website at the expense of other local economic development efforts. Mr. Ignatowski said he should be able to balance his time so other work can be done. Chair Maxwell asked who would update the website. Mr. Ignatowski said there would be a team led by the Economic Development Director. Periodic updates could include highlighting certain local companies as well as business leaders for one-time special attention. Suggestions can be made on Front Porch Forum to keep the website fresh and up-to-date. Manager Schulz asked if the Front Porch Forum survey was able for public view. Mr. Ignatowski said it was not but it could be. Chair Maxwell then thanked Mr. Ignatowski for the update and valuable information.

## **V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a. **November 10, 2020 (Regular Meeting).** Motion by Board member Morse, seconded by Board member Stevens, to approve the minutes. Board member Goodrich noted the minutes stated Board member Morse, in discussing the proposed FY 2021/2022 Town Budget, recommended no line item have an increase of more than nine percent (9%). She believes he actually said no more than five percent (5%). Board member Morse concurred. The minutes will be adjusted accordingly. **Motion to approve the amended minutes passed 4-0-1, with Board member Miller abstaining.**

## **VI. APPROVAL OF BILLS**

- a. **Approval of Warrant #10-21.** Motion by Board member Morse, seconded by Board member Miller, to approve Warrant #10-21 in the amount of \$292,277.71. Board member Stevens noted the purchase of a pickup truck for \$60,000 and asked if Capital Equipment Plan (CEP) funds were used. Manager Schulz said the vehicle was purchased for the Highway Department and CEP funds were used. He noted the entire cost of this purchase will be over \$125,000 as additional equipment (i.e. plow, etc.) will have to be bought. Board member Goodrich saw \$13,942 was spent repairing the Town grader. Manager Schulz confirmed the vehicle required extensive repairs to its hydraulic system, which resulted in this high cost. Board member Goodrich would like to discuss during the upcoming budget sessions whether it is time to start funding a replacement grader. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**
- b. **Approval of Biweekly Payroll through November 15, 2020.** Motion by Board member Morse, seconded by Board member Stevens, to approve the biweekly payroll in the amount of \$97,715.92. Chair Maxwell noted the FY 2020/2021 Northfield Police Department (NPD) overtime budget already has been half spent even though we are less than five (5) months into the current fiscal year. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

## **VII. SELECT BOARD**

- a. **Adoption of Australian Ballot Voting for Town Meeting 2021 (re: Act 162).** Manager Schulz said although Northfield residents have voted on several ballot items by Australian ballot in recent years, the proposed municipal budget and a few other items have been voted upon from the floor at the open session. However, due to COVID-19 social distancing concerns, the Vermont State Legislature has passed Act 162, which would allow municipalities to switch to all Australian Ballot Town Meetings without having to hold a separate authorization vote. This change is for 2021 only and all that is required is Select Board approval. Since any increases in the FY 2021/2022 budget will be low, Manager Schulz wanted to see if the Select Board would like to pursue this. The proposed budget can be discussed at the public hearing at which all Australian Ballot items will be discussed (02/23/21). Motion by Board member Morse, seconded by Board member Goodrich, to hold an Australian Ballot Town Meeting in March 2021. Board member Morse asked if voters would be able to obtain absentee ballots if they chose. Manager Schulz confirmed they would. Board member Morse asked when this decision needed to be made. Manager Schulz said within the next month would be best since the 2021 Town Warning needed to be prepared, etc. Board member Morse doesn't foresee the possibility of mass public meetings until late next year at the earliest. Board member Stevens agrees as he doesn't think the state will relax its limit on public meetings (i.e., no more than 75 people for an indoor meeting) for some time. Board members Goodrich and Miller see no reason to delay this decision. Chair Maxwell thinks this is an unfortunate development as holding nighttime open sessions the past few years has resulted in a marked increase in public attendance. Should there be miraculous developments, this matter could be revisited. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**
- b. **FY 2021/2022 Northfield Town Budget.** Manager Schulz said management has been working with department heads over the past couple months in order to develop a draft FY 2021/2022 municipal budget. The initial draft proposes a three percent (3%) tax increase and would use \$147,000 in prior year surplus to keep the tax rate low. The Operations and Maintenance (O&M) budget would increase by less than one percent (1%) with major personnel savings in the Police and Listers departments. The Highway budget will increase by \$25,000 mainly due to personnel costs specified by the union contract. The only significant increase in road material spending will be for sand. The Northfield Ambulance Service (NAS) budget will increase by \$16,000 due to increased billing costs and higher costs for supplies. The Highway Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) will see a major increase as \$100,000 will be added as there is need to start a CIP account to fund the local share for the cost of replacing the Main Street Bridge in coming years. Some past year surplus funds will be used for this purpose as well. The annual resurfacing of the backroads will be level funded at \$90,000.

The Capital Equipment Plan (CEP) budget will decrease by \$58,000 in FY 2021/2022 as this amount was budgeted last year to fund purchase of a new Fire Tanker Truck. There also may be increases to replace an NPD cruiser as well as possible replacements for the Highway Department's grader and excavator. Debt payments will decrease by \$123,000 as some old loans have been or will be retired in coming months. Also, the first payment for the principal of the borrowing to fix Union Brook Road won't be due for another fiscal year.

Chair Maxwell asked if the Town Budget and Financial Review Subcommittee (Board members Goodrich and Morse) had any comments. Board member Morse said the subcommittee met last week (11/18/20) and there was some discussion of increasing the amount budgeted for the South Main Street Stormwater project. Manager Schulz said the Town CIP budget already had funds allocated for this project but not an increase from previous years. Costs to date have been split evenly between the Highway Department and the Sewer Department but this can be changed if the Select Board members chose to do so. After some discussion, it was decided that full-board budget meetings will be scheduled for coming weeks even though Chair Maxwell doesn't see the need to conduct a review of each budget line item. He feels it is important for all Board members to discuss major issues but no reason to get bogged down in minutia. Chair Maxwell also hopes the number and length of budget meetings can be reduced this year. As for the South Main Stormwater project, Board member Morse would like to see a "white paper" that would provide firm cost estimates and a timeline. Both Board members Stevens and Miller would like to suggest some adjustments to certain budgets. The budget meetings will be scheduled as soon as possible.

- c. **Northfield VT Social Media Policy.** Manager Schulz has provided an update to the municipal Social Media Policy that was approved in July 2015. The main addition is to prohibit town officials and employees from submitting postings related to municipal business either anonymously or using a false name. Board member Morse asked if this provision was vetted by an attorney. Manager Schulz said he did not seek a legal opinion and did not think this was necessary since this provision was included in a Vermont League of Cities & Towns (VLCT) model policy. VLCT usually researches these matters fully to ensure they pass muster. Motion by Board member Morse, seconded by Board member Stevens, to approve the updated Social Media Policy as presented. Board member Miller has concerns with some of the wording but doubts a perfect policy on this is possible. Chair Maxwell would like Front Porch Forum added to the social media sites listed in the definitions section. There was no objection. **Motion to approve with the above amendment passed 5-0-0.**
- d. **Northfield VT Mask Mandate.** Manager Schulz said the Select Board members fully discussed whether to institute a local mask mandate with penalties in September 2020. The consensus at that time was to encourage mask usage through more extensive public outreach, including new signage, instead of approving a local ordinance. Given the recent spike in Washington County positive COVID-19 tests, some residents have asked the Select Board members to revisit this issue. Manager Schulz has composed a Select Board resolution that would require municipal employees to wear face masks in the presence of others while encouraging local businesses to take all precautions to "protect the public health and welfare" by requiring customers to wear masks, practice social distancing, etc. Motion by Board member Stevens, seconded by Board member Morse, to approve the resolution as presented. This resolution will expire when the state's mask mandate is lifted by Governor Phil Scott. Board member Goodrich feels this resolution encourages Northfield residents to follow the state's COVID-19 mandates. Board member Miller feels this resolution is not perfect but better than nothing. Given the number of new cases in Northfield, he feels it is important to strongly encourage compliance with state mandates. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

#### VIII. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

- a. **December Regular Select Board Meetings.** Manager Schulz reminded the Select Board members that the second regular meeting next month is scheduled for December 22, 2020. Should the Select Board members choose to cancel this meeting due to its proximity to the Christmas holidays, they would need to approve a motion at the previous meeting (12/08/20) that would authorize the Select Board Chair to review and approve any payroll or other operating expenses through the end of the month.
- b. **Northfield Falls Pedestrian Improvements.** Several residents have requested pedestrian improvements in Northfield Falls, including a lighted crossing sign similar to the ones installed on Depot Square and near the Norwich University campus. Since this is a state highway, Manager Schulz has reached out to the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) regarding how to expedite this.

- c. **South Main Street Sidewalk Project.** Manager Schulz has been frustrated with the slow pace of this project, which was supposed to have been completed this calendar year. There is good weather predicted for the coming week so perhaps additional progress can be made this construction season. The turned-up portions not paved this year will be graveled so they will be passable during the winter months. Board member Stevens asked if the old curbing left on residents' lawns will be collected before the work shutdown. Manager Schulz said they would be and then transferred to the Falls pit for future use in Northfield. Chair Maxwell asked how much of the project has been done to date. Manager Schulz said by footage about half has been completed. The contractor has been paid for about fifty percent (50%) of the project. Chair Maxwell has been very disappointed by the contractor's performance and asked if we could hire a new contractor next spring to complete the project. Manager Schulz said that would be the Select Board's option since the project contract called for all work to be completed in 2020.

**IX. BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS, CONCERNS, QUESTIONS**

- a. **CERV Land Purchase.** Board member Goodrich asked about the status of the proposed land purchase on Kent Street. Manager Schulz said the draft agreement has been signed on behalf of the municipality and forwarded to CERV. There has been outreach to the property owner and it now is CERV's responsibility to execute the purchase.
- b. **NAVI Christmas Tree and Wreath Sale.** Chair Maxwell noted Northfield Ambulance Volunteers, Inc. (NAVI) will be holding its annual tree and wreath sale at the Ambulance Bay from Saturday, November 28, 2020 through Christmas Eve. Trees and wreaths come in a variety of sizes and are available for sale from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. during the week and from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on weekends. Free delivery is available.
- c. **Christmas on the Common.** Chair Maxwell asked if there would be a tree lighting ceremony this year. Manager Schulz said a Christmas tree has been donated and will be placed and decorated on the Common next week but there will be no ceremony due to COVID-19 social distancing restrictions.

**X. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (UNSCHEDULED)**

- a. **Mark Fournier: Public Participation Procedure.** Mr. Fournier believes Chair Maxwell is incorrect in attempting to curtail public comment until the end of the meeting. This means that members of the public would be unable to discuss an action item until after it had been approved (or rejected) by the Select Board.
- b. **Mark Fournier: Covered Bridges Protection.** Mr. Fournier noted how often the covered bridges have been damaged in recent months by truckers ignoring height limits. It felt it might be a good idea to install CCTV cameras on the bridges so that the perpetrators could be identified and subsequently compelled to pay for repairs, etc.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT.** Motion by Board member Morse, seconded by Board member Stevens, to adjourn.  
**Motion passed 5-0-0.**

The Board adjourned at 10:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Kenneth L. McCann*

Kenneth L. McCann, Acting Clerk

An audio recording of this meeting is available in the Town Manager's Office.

These minutes were revised and approved at the regular Select Board meeting of December 8, 2020.